



BAPTIST PRESS
News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE
460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
Telephone (615) 244-2355
W. C. Fields, Director
Jim Newton, Assistant Director

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Walker L. Knight, Chief, 1330 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30309, Telephone (404) 873-4041
DALLAS Billy Keith, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) 741-1996
NASHVILLE (Baptist Sunday School Board) Lynn M. Davis, Jr., Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37203, Telephone (615) 254-1631
RICHMOND Jesse C. Fletcher, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (703) 353-0151
WASHINGTON W. Barry Garrett, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

January 20, 1971

**Crisis In Retirement Incomes
Causes Grim Life for Elderly**

WASHINGTON (BP)--A report released here by a special Senate committee paints a grim picture of life for millions of elderly Americans and those approaching retirement. It predicts that unless the nation makes a new commitment to the problems of retired persons "a new group of aged poor is in the making."

"A most distressing fact--a disgrace in a nation pledged to an all-out war on poverty--is that there was an increase in both the number and the proportion of aged poor between 1968 and 1969," the Senate Special Committee on Aging said. Its report, "Economics of Aging," was released after a two-year study. Sen. Harrison A. Williams Jr., (D., N.J.) is chairman of the committee.

One out of every four Americans over 65 is living in poverty, according to the report. Statistics compiled by the committee show that in 1969 there was an increase of almost 200,000 persons over 65 in the poverty population. The one in four figure is in contrast to a ratio of one in nine for persons under 65 with poverty-level incomes.

During its two years of studying the special problems of the aged, it became clear, the report stated, "that the committee had an obligation to declare that the retirement income problem in the United States had become a retirement income crisis."

Among the many recommendations in the report, the committee asked for an Institute on Retirement Income to "conduct studies and make recommendations designed to enable individuals to enjoy an adequate retirement income."

The institute, the report stated, would be a "think tank" concerned with all aspects of retirement income--private pensions, Social Security and other systems of retirement assistance, not necessarily limited to existing plans or programs.

The "unnoticed crisis" among retired persons was attributed by the committee to "generally inadequate retirement incomes." This has been intensified, the report said, by new demands upon that income. In addition to overall inflation, the report noted increased property taxes making it impossible for many homeowners to hold on to their homes, and the skyrocketing costs in medicine and health care.

As an example, the committee reported that in fiscal year 1969 the average health bill for a person 65 or older was \$692, an amount six times that for a youth and two and one-half times that for a person aged 19-64.

Medicare, the government's program for elderly medical care, provides less than 50 per cent of all health care costs of the elderly, the report said.

Another problem contributing to lower incomes among retired persons is widespread unemployment among workers 45 years old or older. Since January 1969, according to the report, unemployment in this age group has had a 71 per cent increase, jumping from 596,000 unemployed persons to 1,017,000.

Also in this age group, unemployment lasts longer and the jobless worker has a harder time finding new employment. This condition has led many persons, the committee said, to retire earlier, thus taking reduced Social Security benefits.

The alarming increase of poor persons in the 45-64 age bracket led the committee to predict that "a new group of aged poor is in the making." Nearly 8.5 million persons

in this age group now have poverty-level incomes. Even more disturbing, the committee said, is that 28,000 in this age category have been added to the poverty rolls since 1968.

"For the first time since poverty statistics were tabulated, the number of middle-aged and older persons in poverty has increased," the committee emphasized.

Although the report paints a grim picture of retirement problems, the committee is optimistic that solutions can be "sold" to Congress and the nation early in the 1970's. It noted plans for the 1971 White House Conference on Aging, the first to be held since 1960, and the nationwide interest in older Americans.

Also, the committee cited proposals in Congress for major changes in Social Security and the President's Family Assistance Act which would raise all older Americans above the poverty line.

Solutions to the grave problem of old-age poverty must be sold also to the young, the committee said, "who will some day find that today's solution for others will be his, too, in fewer years than he thinks.

-30-

Arkansas Launches Drive
To Bolster Giving Trends

1/20/71

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP)--The Executive Board of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention named two Little Rock pastors to head a three-year promotional campaign aimed at bolstering giving trends among Baptist churches in the state.

The campaign would provide more support for the Cooperative Program unified plan of giving, and capital need funds for the convention's two colleges, Ouachita Baptist College, Arkadelphia, and Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge, Ark.

Named to head the campaign were W. O. Vaught Jr., pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church here and Rheubin L. South, pastor of Park Hill Baptist Church, North Little Rock, serving as co-chairman.

As endorsed by the state convention last November, the campaign will emphasize the Cooperative Program in 1971, Ouachita University in 1972, and Southern Baptist College in 1973.

In other action, the board voted to create a new department of work called the Stewardship-Cooperative Program department, and voted to employ a full-time department head. Charles Ashcraft, executive secretary of the convention, said he hopes to have a recommendation for the new position soon.

The stewardship promotion assignment has in the past been handled by either an associate to the executive secretary, or by the annuity secretary in addition to other responsibilities.

-30-

1971

Faint, illegible text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.



BAPTIST PRESS

460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219

RECEIVED
JAN 21 1971

HISTORICAL COMMISSION, SEC

DAVIS C. WOOLLEY HO
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
187 NINTH AVE. N.
NASHVILLE, TENN. 37203